



**MEETING OF THE
TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION**

June 2, 2020

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TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2020

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Good morning, everyone.

This meeting is called to order. Mr. Trobman, has anyone signed up for public comment?

MR. TROBMAN: [Unintelligible]

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you very much.

Good morning, Ms. Miller.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you. This brings us to the end of Agenda Items 3 through 7. Let's pause for a few minutes to reset for the rest of the meeting. Good morning, Mr. Serna.

ED SERNA: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Commissioners. For the record Ed Serna. I only have two updates for you. One from Clay Cole on UI and the other from Courtney Arbour on Workforce activities. So we'll start with Clay Cole.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: So this is on Agenda Item 9--

ED SERNA: I'm sorry, yes.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: --for discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding guidance on resource utilization and implementation of services and strategies to target to disaster relief efforts in public health emergencies, including those funded with the Department of Labor's Disaster Dislocated Worker Grant.

1 ED SERNA: Yes, sir. Clay Cole.

2 CLAY COLE: Good morning, Chairman Daniel,
3 Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Demerson, Mr. Serna. For the
4 record, Clay Cole, Unemployment Insurance Division Director.
5 Quick update on some statistics. To date TWC's paid out over
6 9.5 billion in unemployment insurance benefits and closed nearly
7 four million assignments. Clearly we know we have work to do in
8 assisting all those out there that need our services, so we're
9 continuing to really work to make sure we meet their needs.

10 Big update, today is--this weekend we
11 received official notice from the Department of Labor that Texas
12 is triggered on to stay unemployed insurance extended benefits.
13 And under the CARES Act, the Department of Labor is reimbursing
14 states 100 percent for state extended benefits paid. The state
15 extended benefits is an additional 50 percent of the regular UI
16 entitlement up to 13 weeks of additional unemployment insurance.
17 And this follows the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment
18 Compensation period, so TWC could start paying state extended
19 benefits the week ending July 4, 2020.

20 UI and IT have been working on programming
21 in anticipation of us triggering on. UI and External Relations
22 have prepared a press release we plan to release after today's
23 commission meeting. The extension does not provide additional
24 benefits to those covered under the Pandemic Unemployment
25 assistance, such as the self-employed and the independent

1 contractors. This is an additional up to 13-week extension for
2 those covered employees that exhaust the Pandemic Emergency
3 Unemployment Compensation. UI and IT completed notifying all of
4 our potential PEUC, that's Pandemic Emergency Unemployment
5 Compensation individuals to date, and date we processed over
6 50,000 PEUC claims.

7 Teams continue to work on plans for Texas
8 reopening businesses and have been looking at ways to expand our
9 self-service opportunities for customers really to help minimize
10 cause for assistance. And this concludes my brief update, and
11 I'll be happy to answer any questions you might have.

12 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Comments or questions?

13 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: No here, Chairman.

14 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None here.

15 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Clay, thank you.

16 ED SERNA: Before we go to Courtney, I
17 would point out something that Clay didn't mention, but we are
18 making a number of outbound calls, as well, to those customers
19 of ours that we know have an issue. So instead of waiting to
20 try to get people to reach us, we flipped a call center and are
21 pretty much dedicating it 100 percent to outbound calls, and
22 we're targeting those areas that seem to be issues with our
23 customers and increasing issues with our customers, such as back
24 pay or still trying to get in--a start date set up. So--

25 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Great.

1 ED SERNA: So now we'll do Courtney.

2 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: There's Courtney.

4 COURTNEY ARBOUR: [Unintelligible] my
5 update, Commissioners, if you're ready.

6 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: We're ready.

7 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Ready.

8 COURTNEY ARBOUR: Okay. On April--good
9 morning, Commissioners. Courtney Arbour, Workforce Division for
10 the record. Wanted to give you an update on the funding that
11 was approved on April 14 for COVID response. [Unintelligible]
12 update on four--the four funding [unintelligible] that were
13 approved that day. Adult Ed Funds, as you know, were approved
14 to support distance learning, and with that, providers have
15 procured distance learning licenses to expand classroom
16 training.

17 In this new environment, every Adult Ed
18 provider does offer distance learning and, with this, they were--
19 -they've been able to expand that. I know you wanted some
20 details today, so I'm going to go into a little detail about
21 numbers and dollars spent [unintelligible]. 167,000 has been
22 spent for licenses. That bills out the capacity for online
23 testing, also, which was--about 53,000 was spent for that.
24 You're aware that not only do we need to provide classes
25 virtually right now, we also need to ensure that students can

1 test. That was a challenge early on and the team has worked
2 across the state with vendors and our providers to ensure that
3 testing is now an option. So we got the funding stamp both on
4 testing, some on staffing, as well, but with the primary use of
5 the funds for distance learning licenses. And I will just
6 congratulate our Adult Ed providers for really rising to the
7 occasion here and extending services to make sure that students
8 have options.

9 With the up to \$10 million in skills
10 development funding approved, 37 applications have been received
11 by TWC from colleges and boards, totally \$6.2 million in
12 funding. The [unintelligible] support an estimated 3,802
13 trainees now through July 2020. The training will be ongoing
14 but just wanted to give you an idea of kind of the training
15 that's happening right this minute. And the training programs,
16 so far, are related to things very specific to COVID in most
17 cases. Food service and social distancing, CDL, certified
18 electrical technician, telehealth, [unintelligible], logic
19 controllers, supply line--supply chain logistics, excuse me, and
20 IT systems, such as security, and other IT programs. So we've
21 got good traction with the skills funding.

22 Approximately \$4 million in TANF funding
23 was approved for local workforce development boards, primarily
24 to hire staff. As you know, the majority of the local
25 employment specialist staff have been repurposed, or repurposed

1 for a very long period, to help with the rush of unemployment
2 insurance claim needs that we had. So you all approved funding
3 primarily for local boards to staff up. And with that, at least
4 81 staff have been or will be hired. And what those staff
5 primarily do at the local level are work with employers to
6 provide information about COVID grants that are available and
7 also help them with their training needs, help them to get their
8 jobs posted, help with information about bonding and work
9 opportunity tax credit and other credits.

10 In addition, those staff help job seekers.
11 It is very common that they will be making phone call--taking
12 and making phone calls to job seekers helping them to update
13 their resumes, get them registered in Work in Texas, talking
14 about labor market information as things change in our state,
15 and helping to make a connection between employers and job
16 seekers.

17 A portion of the fund [unintelligible] used
18 to expand or--purchase or expand their licenses so that they can
19 provide more customer service virtually. Almost everyone we
20 work with that's a grantee has needed to use some amount of
21 funding to expand services. Our boards, with some of the TANF
22 dollars, have expanded online chat to make services available
23 for longer periods of time during the day for people that have
24 questions. They've also offered job readiness workshops, which
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1 I'll talk a little bit more in a minute, and software for hiring
2 events.

3 Next, I will provide an update on the use
4 of the WIOA funding, and as I describe the workshops and some of
5 the software, it's very similar to the use of the TANF funds
6 that I just described so I thought I would just go through the
7 laundry list here but the same type of topics are--have been
8 provided both with the--were covered both with the TANF dollars
9 and the WIOA.

10 So, Commissioners, you have approved four
11 million in WIOA funding on the 14th of April, and to date 6.4
12 million of that is awarded in 14 grants. The workforce
13 [unintelligible]. 4, 750 textbooks [unintelligible] will be
14 served in rapid response activities with these dollars, meaning
15 that through [unintelligible] laid off workers are visited by
16 our staff, unemployment insurance and our staff, and they're
17 provided services to help reconnect them to the Workforce
18 system. And that might look like invitations to different
19 events happening, hiring events, or other events happening at
20 the Workforce Solutions offices providing them with job leads
21 and then giving them a little bit of counseling on the steps
22 they're going to want to take to ready themselves for the next
23 job.

24 1,360 workers will be supported through
25 layoff aversion activities. And what that normally looks like

1 is our staff work with employers and provide some type of
2 financial support--counseling and financial support to employers
3 to help them financially and allowing them to maintain their
4 current workforce. So that, through layoff aversion, we're
5 really able to meet some specific, often COVID-related, needs
6 for employers and help curb some costs for them.

7 More than 3.7 million has been granted to
8 support 103,000 people who oversee different workforce services,
9 either through online platforms or learning management systems.
10 And what that looks like is that the platforms might train
11 customers in job readiness skills--these are the classes I was
12 going to go into some more detail about--resume writing,
13 interviewing skills using new technologies. A lot of people
14 haven't interviewed in a long time, and in this new world, they
15 need to know more about systems that they're going to be
16 interfacing with. The board's also using these virtual
17 platforms to teach interviewing with background issues, how to
18 answer those type of questions in an interview. How to put your
19 best foot forward even though there's something that you do need
20 to disclose to an employer. Career planning and goal setting in
21 the new labor market. Financial responsibility, specifically
22 for, well, anyone who needs financial help--financial counseling
23 or financial responsibility help but also for those who are not
24 accustomed to living, maybe, with unemployment insurance or a
25 lower amount of funding. Most boards are offering some type of

1 financial responsibility and financial knowledge course at this
2 point and being able to do that virtually allows them to reach
3 more people.

4 Two and a half million of the WIOA dollars
5 were for technology for hiring events specifically. Virtual
6 tools that allow them to both [unintelligible] the employers and
7 the job seekers electronically without having to bring people
8 into the office. And learning management systems and technology
9 hubs was something that we've seen boards have a great interest
10 in right now. And basically those systems allow--build a
11 platform for a person to come in and be able to navigate the
12 system, find support service [unintelligible] or other community
13 resources in one place as--in the board's one site bringing
14 things together for customers.

15 Last, I'll mention that the WIOA funds are
16 used to support training in areas like supply chain management,
17 health, safety, and OSHA, [unintelligible], cyber security
18 warehouse management, medical coding. With the funds awarded to
19 date, 5,000 Texans will receive training with those funds
20 through July 2020. Obviously, like I mentioned earlier, the
21 training goes beyond July, but just to give you an idea of
22 what's happening right now, by the end of July we'll have 5,000
23 trained in one of those topics.

24 I'm happy to answer any questions about the
25 [unintelligible].

1 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Comments or questions?

2 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, I have a
3 few. Thank you, Courtney, for the report, and thank you for
4 working closely with all the offices to update us on the
5 activity. So you referenced boards are applying, have
6 initiatives going out there, have planned projects; are all 28
7 boards participating in some type of activity?

8 COURTNEY ARBOUR: That is correct. All
9 boards are providing services virtually or some are still
10 providing a limited amount of in-person services, but all boards
11 are providing those services, including workshops.

12 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: So I want to take
13 this time to applaud them. They're doing great work, and we've
14 been able to, through social media, follow them so we're very
15 grateful to them. I also want to keep in mind that, as you were
16 reporting and giving us updates, I also want to keep in mind
17 that we focus on those individuals that are coming out of--that
18 have been dislocated as a result of agricultural, you know,
19 cuts. The farm workers that, unfortunately, are out of work or
20 displaced. You know, you were talking about that--you were
21 talking about being able to provide them with certifications,
22 distance learning. This is a great group to focus on.

23 And another group that I would ask that our
24 boards look at, and I'm sure they are, is individuals that have
25 been released from our prisons. We're seeing more and more

1 folks that are being released, especially during this time. And
2 then, of course, let's keep in mind that we still have,
3 regardless of where you live in Texas, we still have the digital
4 divide, and so the distance learning, being able to provide them
5 with the equipment needed to successfully complete the programs
6 is important, too. I think everyone, the infrastructure, the
7 broadband service, and maybe hotspots, being creative as
8 possible I think is very important. So I want to take this
9 opportunity to thank you. I know we've worked with you and Dale
10 during this whole process so thank you for that, Courtney, and I
11 would encourage you to continue asking the boards to be as
12 creative as possible. They know that I've always encouraged
13 them to think outside the box. So thank you for that.

14 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Chairman--Courtney,
15 at the end of the month, I'd love to make sure that we have a
16 report that gives us the remaining balances that are due or that
17 are outstanding. I think Adult Ed, the first one, again, tell
18 me how much we approved for that and how much we have right now.
19 What's remaining in Adult Ed?

20 COURTNEY ARBOUR: [Unintelligible], I'm
21 sorry, I wasn't able to hear that last statement or question.

22 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: So Adult Ed, you
23 started out with Adult Ed, the amount that we funded with Adult
24 Ed and what's remaining with Adult Ed.

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1 COURTNEY ARBOUR: I'm so sorry, it's not
2 coming through clear.

3 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: That's okay. You
4 had 167,000 licenses I think you were reporting out, and so I'm
5 just asking for the remaining amount under Adult Ed. How much
6 we approved and what's our remaining amount. If you don't have
7 that now, don't worry. I'll get that later on [unintelligible].

8 COURTNEY ARBOUR: I can get.

9 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Yeah, what I want--

10 COURTNEY ARBOUR: Is it okay--is it all
11 right if I bring you that update, sir?

12 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Yeah. Yeah, that's
13 fine.

14 COURTNEY ARBOUR: Okay.

15 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: That's fine. So,
16 yeah, basically the amounts that we funded and the amounts that
17 are remaining are very important, and so I also want to commend
18 the skills team for what they're doing. As you mentioned, 10
19 million and about six million of those dollars that are spent,
20 and so we have about four million that's remaining there. And
21 that's--congratulations to that team for getting that money out
22 of the door.

23 And then the boards, in what they're doing,
24 again, it looks like we're moving that money and those
25 activities, but I'm really interested in making sure that

1 funding is either full utilized and/or we bring it back and use
2 it in other ways that could be of a benefit.

3 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Yeah, I agree with
4 you, Commissioner. The boards are doing exceptional work right
5 now during this time so--and I'm glad that they're working
6 closely with Dale.

7 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Yep.

8 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Dale's doing a great
9 job.

10 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Making it happen.

11 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Elevated the game.

12 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Courtney?

14 COURTNEY ARBOUR: Yes?

15 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: The--you've outlined, I
16 think, very, very well how boards have adapted to the situation
17 that we find ourselves in, and they're doing a number of things,
18 in fact, many, many things to help in their region, what's
19 important in that region, and I guess that's a long way of
20 saying, you know, I think that the local approach that we're
21 able to bring through Workforce Solutions is often a good
22 approach.

23 But like Commissioner Demerson, I am a
24 little bit focused on unexpended balances, and let me lay this
25 out like this because I want you to understand I'm coming at

1 this from a place of we've done a lot of things, we've been
2 working very, very hard, we're helping a number of people. If
3 you look at skills development, six of 10 million has been
4 allocated at this point. I looked through that list of
5 potential recipients, it is very geographically diverse across
6 the state. Many, many different community colleges are
7 participating. Some Workforce boards are participating under
8 their new eligibility. I think that while that's moving slowly,
9 in my opinion, I think that they're definitely moving toward
10 something that's gonna be very, very helpful to people during
11 this time.

12 And so, you know, the progress there
13 hopefully can speed up and we can get the remainder of that 10
14 million expended for this purpose, but as Commissioner Demerson
15 has alluded to, you know, we can come back in a week or two and
16 take another look at that and try to understand where we are.
17 AEL dollars, very pleased to hear how that's being expended.
18 The TANF dollars I think are going to a very good use.

19 Let me settle back in on the WIOA dollars
20 that we pulled down out of commission reserve funds and some
21 other things to push out there. Based on what I just heard you
22 say, we've spent about 6.4 million of an available 12.8 million;
23 did I get that right from your report?

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1 COURTNEY ARBOUR: [Unintelligible] as far
2 as been awarded of the WIOA funding, that's correct. And it was
3 12 million available.

4 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Yep. I--I've--I think I
5 have some similar concerns to Commissioner Demerson's. I think
6 his view here might be a little longer than mine. I intend
7 today to offer a motion to halt funding on applications that
8 haven't been received and/or approved as of today to give staff
9 time to look at the remaining 6.4 million, bring us a plan. Our
10 next commission meeting is two weeks from today, bring us a plan
11 for an alternative funding program where we might provide
12 training opportunities for all Texans who are on unemployment
13 during this time from the state level so that we can speed that
14 up and scale it statewide with the intention that all board
15 areas would be able to participate but that would be coordinated
16 here at the state level.

17 Now, I have not offered that motion as of
18 this moment. I intend to momentarily. But certainly it would
19 be appropriate at this time to hear from my fellow commissioners
20 if there's any serious objections to this. I want to talk
21 through it here today. But my intent is to offer this motion
22 and hopefully give us a chance to look at this a little
23 different. Sometimes I think we get locked into a model. Our
24 models typically work, but, my goodness, so many different

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1 things going on these days, I want to make sure that we're
2 serving all Texans that can be served here.

3 So, Commissioners, I would really
4 appreciate your input. I'm perfectly prepared to offer the
5 motion, but I don't want to, you know, I don't want to rush this
6 and I think I'm coming at this logically but perhaps you could
7 shed some light on your feelings on the subject.

8 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, I totally
9 agree with you. I'm in support of an in agreement on your marks
10 just made. So no objection here.

11 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Yeah, I think it
12 can make sense. I'd like us to, and I think you mentioned this,
13 whatever we have in the pipeline, making sure that that's taken
14 care. And if it's 6.4 or if it's something else or whatever,
15 going back and making sure that whatever we've committed to that
16 that's allocated and then as of a go-forward basis, that way
17 we're not jerking anybody out of something that they're midway
18 or whatever, but coming up with whatever that dollar amount is
19 and where they are and with the caveat that if there's something
20 midstream or something that we're in a position to not have an
21 unintended consequence of our action. I think if staff's able
22 to do that, we're in a position, Mr. Chair, to move forward.

23 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Commissioner, we're of
24 like mind. I don't want to short-circuit something that's going
25 on that could be beneficial. But, by the same token,

1 government's not known for being nimble and I'm trying to
2 introduce some nimbleness--

3 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: I think it's great.

4 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: --to our response.

5 Here's my motion, then. I move to--

6 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, before I--
7 you make your motion, there is one thing I'd like to just jump
8 on the--on what Dale and his team do. You know, when we train
9 folks, and I'm sure we're all in agreement, we do it for long
10 term, so I just want to make sure that when we implement these
11 types of training models, that these are for long term. You
12 know, it's not just something that's going to be for six weeks
13 and it's gone. And I think you would all agree that just we'd
14 follow the same training programs that we do for upscaling, I
15 guess I would say, that we're doing, and I know we've referenced
16 that multiple times from the [unintelligible]. But I totally
17 agree with what you've said and I look forward to your motion,
18 Chairman.

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Yeah, I mean to that
20 point, I certainly--nothing in my motion is going to impact
21 where we are with skills development. I--while that model
22 operates slowly, and I don't mind saying that, I would love to
23 speed that up a little bit. The underlying foundation of that
24 program works very, very well.

25 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Yes.

1 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's a local community
2 college, oftentimes a local workforce board serving local folks
3 and, traditionally, you know, a local employer that's able to
4 expand job offerings in the area. That particular program, I
5 want to see how it develops on this COVID response for a few
6 more weeks. I do anticipate that there may be some additional
7 dollars there, and we many want to look at something related to
8 upscaling but I think that's premature at this point.

9 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Okay.

10 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: I wanna, before I offer
11 this motion, I do want to address something that you said, and I
12 think that we have been, for some time, talking about this in
13 our commission meetings, which is this notion of upscaling.
14 This is a time when I think that we can really bring some
15 resources to bear on this in an important way. This idea that--
16 when we're--if you analyze who has filed initial unemployment
17 claims, you're gonna see a lot of folks that are in hourly jobs
18 that are--move and fluctuate quite a bit in the marketplace all
19 the time. Certainly during this time it's a downward
20 fluctuation and I'm looking at solutions for that long term.

21 Before February of this year, you know, a
22 primary talk of--topic of conversation that I dealt with out and
23 about as I traveled and visited with different groups was this
24 notion of a gap and middle-skills employees. People who were
25 eligible or eligible, maybe not eligible but certainly trained

1 and ready to go in middle-skills jobs, and I'm viewing this as
2 an opportunity to help some folks who are sort of temporarily
3 out of the workforce, maybe out of a low wage, hourly wage job
4 that didn't necessarily have any kind of advancement potential
5 and give them an opportunity to find some training that will
6 help when they re-enter the workforce, perhaps back to that job.
7 If that's a job they love, I hope that they're able to go back
8 to that. But, certainly, if they want to use this as an
9 opportunity to upscale.

10 And I think that, really, the essence of my
11 motion is that we took this money out of commission reserve
12 funds to make it available, it's been out there for 45 days. I
13 think folks who have needed it have filed applications to access
14 that money. I'm suggesting we bring it back to commission
15 reserve, let staff give us a plan, next meeting, two weeks from
16 today, we'll decide what's the best way for us to proceed
17 forward.

18 To your point, where I'm headed the long
19 way around is, is I don't like just short-term, one-time
20 solutions. I'm looking for some longevity. I--over time, this
21 agency has built good opportunities for people to access
22 training, skills development fund being foremost among those.
23 The folks who have headed that up and led that effort and sort
24 of pushed that effort out there have done a good job. I just
25 want us to keep pushing. I think there's some opportunity for--

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COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Yes.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: --innovation here.

COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Yeah, I agree. And I think our Texas employers, it's an opportunity if we have the skill labor force, workforce, we're in a position to move forward. So anything we can do to be flexible, nimble, creative, along those lines. You talk about [unintelligible], internships, returnships, all of those things that are out there, and if we're training towards that, allowing other individuals opportunities, that's a benefit for our Texas employers.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: So my motion would be as follows: I move we halt funding, board applications, from the approved 12,856,131 COVID response WIOA funds that have not been requested and approved as of June 2, 2020, and instruct staff to come back during the next commission, which is on June 16, 2020, with an alternative plan to use the remaining balance to fund projects that provide rapid training to upscale eligible unemployed Texans.

COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Great motion and I agree to that.

COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Motion has been-- second?

COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: I'll second that.

1 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Okay. And I'm in
2 favor.

3 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Okay. So show us
4 unanimous on the motion. We've got the motion now.
5 Memorialize. Courtney, functionally, bring us a plan and let us
6 look at that. We'll make some kind of final decision at the
7 next commission meeting, which is on June 16.

8 COURTNEY ARBOUR: Okay. Will do.

9 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you so very much.

10 COURTNEY ARBOUR: Thank you.

11 ED SERNA: I have nothing else, sir.

12 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you, Mr. Serna.

13 All right, then that will take us to Tom for a legislative
14 report.

15 TOM McCARTY: Good morning, Chairman
16 Daniel, Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Demerson. Tom
17 McCarty with External Relations. Last Thursday the U.S. House
18 passed HR7010, the Paycheck Protection Program and Flexibility
19 Act of 2020. This bill would give companies more time to spend
20 dollars that they received under the program. They would--this
21 would extend it up to 24 weeks or until the end of the year,
22 whichever came first. And this would still allow them to have
23 loans forgiven. Businesses would also have up to five years
24 instead of two years to repay any money as received, any money
25 owed on a loan, and could use a greater percentage of proceeds

1 on rent and other approved non-payroll expenses. The U.S.
2 Senate will consider this legislation.

3 Yesterday Congressman Brady introduced the
4 Reopening of American by Supporting Workers and Businesses Act
5 of 2020. The bill would allow workers to keep up to two weeks of
6 the supplemental federal unemployment benefits. This is the
7 extra \$600 per week that claimants received after accepting a
8 job. The bill would also address program integrity issues by
9 ensuring that employers can report job refusals and ensure
10 states provide clear notice to unemployment claimants about
11 return-to-work obligations and good cause exceptions. And then,
12 finally, the bill would provide additional relief to reimbursing
13 employers by clarifying that they do not need to pay the entire
14 amount of their obligations and wait for reimbursements.
15 Instead, states can reduce the amount of the obligation up
16 front. The bill has yet to be assigned a bill number and no
17 time table for consideration has been announced.

18 This concludes my remarks and I'm happy to
19 answer any questions you may have.

20 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Questions or comments?

21 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: No, Chairman.

22 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None here.

23 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you.

24 TOM McCARTY: Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Mr. Serna?

1 ED SERNA: No other updates, sir.

2 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you very much.

3 Commissioners, any additional business or announcements?

4 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, if I may,
5 I'd like to introduce to everyone James Sutton, who's sitting in
6 the front row waving his hand. James, could you stand? I was
7 just kidding. I'm--we're very welcome, we've very privileged
8 and honored to have James starting with us. He started with us
9 Monday. His work product, his experience, his attention to
10 detail, we're very impressed with, but I have to commend Sherri
11 Miller for that. I think her team and the product that she
12 produces and then allows us to work with, I--it's--I'd be
13 remiss if I didn't acknowledge the great folks that she has
14 working for her, and we're very fortunate that James comes from
15 her office, where her area [unintelligible] working with us.
16 So, we're very glad to have him here. So, James,
17 congratulations.

18 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Welcome on board,
19 James. I was looking at him thinking he already works here.
20 Where is he? For Sherri's team, congratulations. Welcome.

21 MALE: Yes.

22 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Then, Chairman, I
23 have something else, if I may. I want to thank you, Chairman,
24 and also Commissioner Demerson. Today I'm privileged and
25 honored to be acknowledging the 100th anniversary of Vocation

1 Rehabilitation program. This program, obviously on June 2,
2 1920, President Woodrow Wilson signed a Smith-Fess Act--Fess Act
3 into law, also known as the National Civilian Rehabilitation
4 Act. The program served individuals with individuals with
5 disabilities, providing job placement, counseling, and training
6 and prosthetics. In 1936 Congress passed the Randolph-Sheppard
7 Act to meet employment needs of individuals with blindness,
8 establish preference for vendors who are blind to operate
9 vending and dining facilities on federal property, and in 1938
10 Congress passed the Wagner O'Day Act, which required the federal
11 government to purchase goods from non-profits that employed 75
12 percent of blind workers. Today the federal program is known as
13 the AbilityOne.

14 With that, I am honored to acknowledge
15 today the 100th anniversary, today, the actual day today, June
16 2, as the anniversary of the Vocation Rehabilitation program.
17 So I want to take this opportunity to thank them and, of course,
18 Ms. Fuller and her team for all the great work that they do.

19 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Commissioner
20 Alvarez, thanks for bringing that up.

21 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: No question that that's
22 been a beneficial program for, well, a hundred years now. And
23 any kind of program with that long--kind of longevity I think's
24 proved its value and I'm certainly confident that our Vocation
25 Rehabilitation team here at TWC will, as we enter the next 100

1 years, will continue to innovate and make that useful and
2 helpful to so many Texans.

3 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: I agree.

4 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Are there any other
5 announcements or other order of business which should come
6 before the commission? None? Do we have a motion to adjourn?

7 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, I move
8 that we adjourn.

9 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I second that
10 motion.

11 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
12 seconded to adjourn, and we're adjourned.

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